

**Pen Wavelets.**

The fruits of the earth each contain their own seed, and the power to reproduce depends upon the condition of soil into which the seed falls. So with the fruits of the spirit of God in our hearts. Others may reap the fruits, but unless they garner the seed-life it contains within the soul and sow it in the field of thought, on the great plain of association and in the fertile valley of tongue power, they will be but spongers or beggars.

The Christian feels that he has been taught in the word, therefore he must teach. The glory of God has shone in, hence he must shine out. He has been fed, and now he sets about to feed others. It is just as natural for the spirit to manifest itself in good works as it is for the wind to prove its existence by blowing your hat off your head.

Don't be so slow, brother, in your religious work when you are in a hurry at every thing else.

What a pitiable fellow lives on almost every farm in America! He is involved in farming, politics, and a dozen other pursuits with credit to himself and friends, yet "can't be a Christian", or if he makes pretensions that way, it is so nearly a failure that he is constantly in danger of going into bankruptcy.

This is a time in the year when we are improving the outward surroundings of our homes. I passed a home the other day where a nice Arbutus hedge had taken the place of a thorny one. "this is suggestive" said I to my friend. Some homes need such changes within. There is hatred, ill-will, quarreling, etc., enough to furnish a crown of thorns for each neighbor within miles of them. Let us exchange these thorny natures for the beautiful!

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" A great question asked in time, to be answered in eternity. Did you ever arrange this list of questions? There are a number of them. "What is a man profited though he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" is another.

There is no manner of address that will arouse the souls every faculty as powerfully as a question asked.

R. F. MALLOTT.

Gratis, Ohio. 5-4-'86.

**Lay and Ministerial Preaching.**

The membership of all churches depends too much upon their preachers for the entertainment and instruction of the people who attend the churches. True, churches that employ ministers at a good salary, have a right to expect that their ministers will preach sermons that will edify, instead of convict, and convert. But no church must conclude that she has done her whole duty when she has paid the preacher's salary. It requires more than good sermons to build up a prosperous church. To have good audiences and good hearers, it is necessary to have an attractive and comfortable church-house. Good and comfortable seats, good ventilation and even temperature. In short, an attractive church home. But the visitor will not be at home nor at ease if the master and mistress of the house are stiff, cold, and formal. If love reigns in the family, it will manifest itself to the visitors. If love reigns in the church, the brothers and sisters will show their love for each other and toward all who meet with them. There will be kindly greetings, and God bless you that none can misunderstand. All the membership ought to be ready to lead in singing and prayer. All persons who cannot find comfortable seats should be kindly provided for when possible. Music is a delightful part of worship, books and a leader are necessary to secure it. An organ with a good organist will help the Sabbath school and often the church. There is much for the membership to do, which I have only hinted at, after they have faithfully paid the minister's salary.

If there is so much demanded of the membership where the preacher gets a salary, who is able to point out the duties of a church minister gets no salary? The writer confesses he is not able. If the preacher has to labor for the support of himself and family, the church cannot in reason expect that he will be able to entertain them with a well and thoughtfully prepared sermon. How can he show himself a workman that need not be

ashamed? It appears to me that it is foolish and unjust for the church to require or expect their unpaid preacher to preach entertaining discourses.

Churches that do not pay their ministers can not, with any show of justice, place this load upon the shoulders of one man and compel him to carry it. Such a system not only wrongs the preacher, but it retards the progress of the church and the cause of the Master. A church that has no salaried minister should not have a "regular" preaching service. Their religious service should be of such a character that "all" could take part in it. These services should be prayer-meetings, Sabbath-schools, social meetings as all the members of the church could labor in to build up the church. More of such meetings and less of some kinds of preaching, would make more entertaining services and save more souls. These churches that have nothing to do but "elect a preacher," do not have enough to keep their hearts off the flesh pots of Egypt. Sam Jones says when he was converted, he found he must be a great worker or a great thinker. He said, "Old fellow, you have not got sense enough to be a great thinker, you must be a great worker." If Sam has not sense enough to "think" into the higher life, it is folly for the great body of the church to attempt it. We claim to believe in works and talk a great deal about works, but it all ends in talk. "Work out your own salvation." Each of us must do this work for ourself.

S. M. MINNICH.

Andrews, Ind.

**International Sunday School Lessons.**

BY REV. F. B. HARGREAVES.

Lesson 8.

May 23rd.

**JESUS AT BETHESDA.**

John v, 5 18. Golden Text, John v, 6. Time, A. D. 28, probably about the Passover, though the exact time is not a settled question. Place, Jerusalem, at the pool of Bethesda.

The country was astir. It was the celebration of one of their feasts and the people had gathered from far and near in the ancient city of Jerusalem. Jesus was there. Walking through the streets of the city, quietly watching the crowds and noting the varied incidents peculiar to such occasions, He came to a large pool of water, which was called Bethesda, "house of mercy." On its margin, lining its steps, in the porches which charity had built at its side, were numbers of people afflicted with incurable diseases. There was a legend that at certain seasons an angel came down and troubled the water, and whoever first stepped into the pool after the troubling was healed of whatever disease he had. Such legends were common and were eagerly believed by the people and hence the great number of those whom Jesus found waiting for the moving of the water. He looked pityingly upon them, His heart touched with compassion. He could have healed them all with a word, but that would have defeated the great purposes He had in view. Yet, turning to one poor cripple, who had been diseased for thirty-eight years and who was friendless and alone, He asked him, "wilt thou be made whole?" The man knew nothing of the character of his questioner and simply told of his misfortune in having no one to help him into the pool and how that others always got there before he did, and so one chance after another slipped from his grasp. "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk," said the Master, and the poor cripple rose, gathered up his sleeping mat and went on his way. It was the Sabbath day and such an event naturally drew a vast crowd together in a few minutes and the miraculous cure was soon the all-absorbing topic of discussion in the city. Jesus had quietly passed out amongst the crowd and so escaped identification, but later in the day He went into the Temple and there found the man He had healed. "Behold, thou art made whole," He said, "sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." The man at once went to the authorities and told them who it was who had healed him on the Sabbath day.

The storm of opposition which had been gathering in ecclesiastical circles for many months now found ready expression. Here was a man who did not work in harmony with them, and hence was not

to be tolerated. And here was a man who healed the sick on the Sabbath day in defiance of their law. They gathered round Jesus with their denunciations and brought Him before the authorities on the charge of Sabbath breaking. But His masterly defense threw them into confusion, as He declared Himself to be Divine, the Son of God, and co-equal with God; and they were obliged to set Him free.

It is a remarkable scene. There are the judges and authorities eager to convict the accused if possible. There is the man who was healed of his disease and then brought this storm upon Jesus. There is the master, calm, dignified, patient, divine. This was, in a sense, the crisis of His life. Up to this time He had been practically unmolested, but from henceforth His movements were jealously watched, He was harassed, and finally betrayed. This was the beginning of the end.

**LESSON THOUGHTS.**

1. The spiritual Bethesda has a cure for every one.
2. God gives us strength to do as He commands us.
3. Do not wait for emotions or feeling, mere troubling of the water, but turn your eyes to Jesus, the Savior of the world.
4. The Sabbath is yours. Make it holy by your deeds and lives.

**The Middle Cross.**

A GOOD-FRIDAY MEDITATION.

BY REV. DAWSON BURNS, D.D.

Three crosses rise; fierce robbers hang on two; Barabbas on the third was marked to hang; But with hoarse voices, like to roaring waves, The multitude this morning called for his Release; and he is free, as though no blood Had stained his hands. Now in his guilty stead Upon the middle cross hangs One, who by No word or act did ill to any, but Was kind to all, strewing His path with good, And from the summer of His soul, causing New joy to blossom and exhale where'er He trod. His wondrous gifts, miraculous, Such as no prophet, even Moses, claimed, Were used for others' weal. The darkened eye And heart received new light; disease gave place To health; the powers of darkness quailed and fled, And Death resigned his spirits. Yet, HE is here Upon this middle cross, as if to stamp Some special deed of wickedness and shame. What means this spectacle? Who shall explain This mystery? Whence has his strength gone forth? Why is Barabbas free and Jesus dying On the accursed tree? Such mystery A greater wonder solves—*He willed it so!* No might has vanquished His; no guile has made His wisdom vain. That which they do with sin He suffers to be done, that He, by suffering, May be perfected, and His great work be Thus complete. Oh, mystery of heavenly Love! For this he lived and toiled, expectant; And from this cross He teaches more than He Has taught before, making the measure of Man's guilt the measure of God's truth and grace He, righteous, satisfaction makes for all Our guilty race; and his overflowing love, Which makes our sin more sinful seem, yet fills Us with a spirit hating every sin. His cross an altar is; He is both Priest And Victim; and, dying, gives new life to All who feel how saving is His pity. Henceforth the Cross, so odious held by all, Shall rule new hearts and lives, and losing all Its baseness, shall through ages countless be The chosen sign of all that is most dear, Most pure and comforting. Sin shall fly it, But the sinful seek it; and as they see Him there, Love's noblest sacrifice, they too Shall love Him gratefully, and make His love their own.

I believe not a few keep hold of their senses in virtue of doing hard work. \* \* \* And I think that not a few, especially women, lose their senses from having nothing to do. Many more who are not in danger of this, lose their purity and rectitude.—GUILD COURT.